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New Orleans 1877

This is the last of excerpts from the pamphlet by "The Special".

"Galveston is neat, new and progressive. Her streets are well paved, stores handsome, and hotels well kept. The cooling, invigorating breezes from the gulf sweep freely across the tongue of land, upon the tip of which the city is built. Galveston claims 40,000 inhabitants, and is rapidly increasing in population. If the efforts of Major Tiowei are crowned with the success predicted for them, the shipping interests of the city will be increased in an enormous ratio. Galveston is the natural outlet of all that great empire of Nature whose insignia is the single star, and of which it is said, 'food and raiment for forty millions of people can be produced within her borders.'

"Give ship-owners a safe and convenient harbor, and they will come and carry the products of the soil to every land, and if, in the past year, 400,000 immigrants were added to the population of Texas, as is claimed, the year which witnesses the opening of Galveston harbor will record their coming by the million."

"About two o'clock we arrived at Clinton, the head of navigation. Here we were found awaiting us a large delegation of the leading residents of the city of Houston, headed by the Mayor. After a short inspection of the extensive shipping facilities at this point, which include a steam cotton press, we embarked upon a 'Special' or the thriving town above named, several of our party riding upon the pilot by way of variety. Houston is but six miles from Clinton, and so the ride was a brief one."



"I had time, however, to note that the sound of the trowel and hammer prevails everywhere; that the streets are broad and well laid out; that the town is full of trading and traders, and above all, that the same spirit of enterprise which exists with Galveston is found here."

"That night, as we rolled along, Nature treated us to a specimen of a Texan storm. For hours the wind rocked our car. The bottom fell out of the heavens, and the incessant play of sheet lightning enabled us to see that the country about us was

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Local Section's Duty

"NOWADAYS the Local Section, to many members, is the Society itself", remarked Director Dennis, speaking before his home Section in Los Angeles last spring. His general topic was co-ordination between the Section and the Society.

Although the Section seems to be a decentralizing agency, according to Mr. Dennis, it co-operates in many ways with Headquarters in spite of remoteness. The Society has demands on the Section in connection with membership, meetings, ethics, and other professional services, and, in return, it renders financial help.

On its part the Section undertakes to "carry the Society to its members", realizing that in such measure as the subsidiaries prosper, the Society will likewise benefit. In fine, he suggests that Sections and Technical Divisions constitute channels through which "the individual member can best realize to himself the largest measure of benefit arising from his membership."

Friendliness

*By Albert A. Northrop
Chairman*

IN the desire that the Fall Meeting, recently held in Boston, might be characterized by a particularly friendly atmosphere, a plan was initiated whereby a relatively large group of members resident in Boston would make an effort to extend an invitation to others and to urge them to attend the meeting.

To bring this about a Personal Invitation Committee was formed to write personal letters to all members within a reasonable distance, inviting them to be present. The Chairman, who was a member of the General Committee, chose four Vice-Chairmen to act with him. Each Vice-Chairman selected six Captains and each Captain, in turn, chose six Team-mates, so that the organization when complete was as follows:

Chairman	1
Vice-Chairmen	4
Captains	24
Team-mates	144

Total members on the Committee 173

Each Team-mate was furnished with the names and addresses of not more than five members to whom he was to write. Two letters were sent out. The first one was mailed about ten days before the program of the meeting was received by the members and the second about ten days before the meeting convened. In this way, 1,442 letters were written to 721 members without asking any one person to write more than ten letters in all.

Replies from these letters of invitation were received from 139 people, of whom 124 accepted. These were in addition to the many oral acceptances from those who lived with-

in commuting distance of Boston and who would attend as a matter of course. The letters were instrumental in bringing a number of members who had never been present at a Society meeting before and who made up their minds to come only after receiving the second letter. The total registration was in fact more than 800 persons, of whom 412 were members of the Society and 105 were students.

A sincere effort was made to welcome in person every one to whom letters had been sent and who registered at the meeting. To this end at least one member of the Committee was always in attendance at the registration desk and was on the lookout for those who had received letters.

The Committee believes that the effort was well worthwhile, as it gave evidence to the recipients of the letters that they were really wanted and, at the same time, provided for the 173 members of the Committee a more personal interest in the meeting and in those who attended.

The Mail Meter

EVERY time a general letter, circular, program, or other letter-size piece of mail is forwarded to each of the 14,000 members of the Society, the affixing of the required postage stamps would constitute no small task. It is easy to visualize the disruption of office procedure which might ensue if all hands were needed for the job.

Fortunately, such a routine process lends itself admirably to machine performance. A compact little mail meter seals each letter fed into it, prints on it the equivalent of a stamp, and, in addition, carries the postage account on a built-in adding machine. The processing of 14,000 letters requires 5 hours by this modern method. The Society has used its meter since April, 1923, for practically all mail except publications. During 1928 the mail meter dials recorded more than 236,000 impressions.

If one is not already familiar with this type of office equipment, a visit to the main office during the Annual Meeting—or at any time—may incidentally satisfy one's natural curiosity as to why the envelopes are sealed upside down. At the same time, that visit may reveal other interesting sidelights on the various functions of Headquarters.

Discuss Them

SPECIFICATIONS for Steel Railway Bridges, as recently accepted by the Joint Conference Committee of the American Railway Engineering Association and the American Society of Civil Engineers, will be found in Part I, for the information of the membership and for constructive discussion by the profession. In the letter of transmittal addressed to the Board of Direction, Henry B. Seaman, Chairman of the Society's representatives on the Committee, states:

"The Specifications are the result of more than three years' work of the Conference and, generally speaking, are better than anything of the kind that has yet been produced. They are, as all Committee work must be, the result of a series of compromises, and any bridge engineer who uses them may desire some slight modification, but they will form the basis of any future progress in this line, and will be a convenient reference for current practice."

It should not be necessary to point out that these Specifications are decidedly important. They are worthy of the thoughtful comment, either pro or con, of the many members of the Society who are competent to judge their merits or their faults.

Lantern-Lectures

LANTERN slides on various notable engineering projects are now available to Student Chapters. Each unit consists of a mimeographed lecture accompanied by about fifty slides.

Some engineer closely connected with each job has either written the lecture himself or furnished the outline and the data to the Headquarters Staff for preparation. It is contemplated that some member of the Chapter will sit down for an hour or so with the lecture and the slides, and by going over them, can readily prepare himself to deliver a satisfactory and, it is hoped, interesting story of a project he may never have seen.

The lectures now ready for distribution carry the following titles:

Cascade Tunnel.

Miami Conservancy District.

Westchester Country Park System.

Mississippi River Flood Control.

Hetch Hetchy Water Supply and Power.

Conowingo Hydro-Electric Development.

Muscle Shoals Hydro-Electric Development.

Recent Power Development at Niagara Falls.

Other subjects will be added to the list as promptly as the special material for them is accumulated.

These lectures, which have been prepared at the suggestion of the Student Chapter Committee, may be had, carriage free, by Student Chapters upon request to the Headquarters Office. It is conceivable that Local Sections might wish to use them, also, in which case an inquiry will establish the state of their availability.

City Planning Division

By C. E. Grunsky
Chairman, Executive Committee

THE City Planner's field of activity is ever widening. The early urban problems relating to layout of streets, to zoning, and to park and playground areas were quickly followed by the larger problem of regional planning. And now, stimulated by the demand of the autoist, the projects are becoming State-wide. Highways and boulevards, recreation and forest reserves, summer camps, and game refuges are all coming in for consideration. It is not surprising, therefore, that engineers in increasing numbers are giving attention to the city planning branch of engineering.

In an earlier contribution to Part II of Proceedings the writer called attention to some matters that had come before meetings of the City Planning Division for discussion, and reference was made to the fact that the city planner must have imagination. He must look far into the future because 25 or even 50 years is only a short span in the life of a city. Why not, therefore, give thought to the matter of future land requirements and easements for the widening of streets, for the removal of sidewalks from street areas, and for parks and playgrounds? Why not demand that provision be made in the basic laws for the acquisition by the public, now, of rights of way and of lands, possession of which perhaps need not be taken for 25 or 30 years?

The writer renews the suggestion which he has repeatedly made, that this scheme of anticipating future right-of-way requirements could be made workable. Why, for example,

should not the property owner on Broadway, New York, be paid now for a sidewalk right of way 25 ft. wide and 16 ft. high back of the building line, on the condition that he enter into a lease of the space, which he is ultimately to give up, for 30 years at 6% the amount of cash which is paid him for the easement?

Within the 30 years the owner will either have replaced his old building and will have put the sidewalk where it belongs or within this time he will have adjusted himself to the proposed arcaded street. He will have had the use of whatever sum was paid to him, at 6%, he will have had undisturbed use of his property for the agreed term, and, at the end of this term, he is relieved of further interest payments. In the meantime the City will have been receiving 6% on the cost of the right of way, to meet which it will have issued bonds at about 4.5 per cent. The City, during the 30 years, will have been making 1.5% per annum on the cost of the right of way, or nearly enough to wipe out its cost.

When confidence in city planning commissions shall have been fully established, when their determination of zones, of heights of buildings, of set-back lines, and the like shall be accepted as final, may it not be possible to find the way clear for such a proceeding as that suggested? For example, the cost of land for new streets and for street-widening purposes could be made nominal, provided only that the improvement be recognized as necessary well in advance of the time when the need for the same shall become imperative.

Looking ahead in this fashion, city planners, better than any one else, recognize the difficulties into which the unrestricted privilege of erecting skyscrapers is leading the modern city. Who in New York or Chicago would venture to assert the right of the public to prohibit additional tall buildings? The owner of the vacant lot demands the same unrestricted use of his property that has been accorded to his neighbor and it will hardly be withheld. Thus, in the larger cities, the mischief is already done and the problems of the congested down-town area grow apace.

The small town, unwilling to profit by the lesson of its metropolitan neighbor, welcomes and boasts of the advent of the first tall building. Who is there that will call a halt, remind-

ing the property owner that the town layout is not adapted to the volume of traffic which results from the tremendous concentration of business in blocks of high buildings? Who will dare to prescribe regulations, as in Europe, holding that the lot owner cannot go skyward beyond a reasonable limit without encroaching on the rights of his neighbor and of the public?

Perhaps this fundamental principle will yet be recognized and, as has been suggested years ago, provision may be made for a tax on all floor space above a reasonable height, so heavy that building above this height will not be profitable. Under such a regulation, once its permanency is assured, cities and their business districts would spread out horizontally as they should and the down-town transportation problems would be greatly simplified.

Mature thought along these and similar lines should be productive of discussions which are timely and which may be of much needed aid in forestalling much inconvenience and embarrassment.

Porto Rico Section

THE forty-ninth Local Section of the Society was officially sanctioned by the Board of Direction on October 7. Twenty-seven members from Porto Rico—practically every resident member on the Island—either signed the petition or agreed to join.

The reader with an eye for figures may have noted that there were 48 Local Sections and 48 States in the Union. The logic is not complete because some States have no Sections while others contain several, yet there is a pleasing fancy in the formation of the 49th Section in a Possession of the United States which some day may become the 49th State.

In the thirty years since Porto Rico has been part of the United States, progress in engineering has found ready reflection in the bustling activities of the Island. For example, San Juan, the capital, has recently become an important port of call for air transport service. For years there has been a growing list of Insular members of the Society, so it is but a logical step for them to seek the potential advantages in local association.

December Proceedings

ATTEMPTING to do at least partial justice to an important Society meeting, the first series of papers or chapters in the December Proceedings are devoted to abstracts of the technical papers delivered at the Fall Meeting in Boston, October 9-10, 1929.

In general, the main sessions were devoted to engineering development of the Boston Metropolitan District. After covering the general features and administration of the District, individual authors described the results as applied to the Park System, Water Supply, Transportation, and Sewerage. Then follow digests of the papers delivered at the City Planning, Structural, Power, Highways, and Surveying and Mapping Divisions.

In all 17 individual papers are covered, not to mention many discussions, of varying length. These abstracts not only give an immediate report on these important topics, but provide a sort of bird's-eye view of the entire meeting for the benefit of the absent member.

Then follows an interesting account by Messrs. David L. Yarnell and Floyd A. Nagler, Members, on the "Effect of Turbulence on the Registration of Current Meters". In these important experiments, the meters were held stationary in a controlled stream of water. Variations in readings were found to be due mainly to the obliquity of flow in the filaments striking the meter. Further, with the meter held rigidly and in general line with the stream, turbulent flow invariably caused the cupped meter to over-register and the screw type to under-register.

Next in order appear "General Specifications for Steel Railway Bridges" as prepared by a Conference representing Committees of the Society and the American Railway Engineering Association. Although in general appearance these are quite similar to previous specifications, important changes and additions have been made, so that the result justifies, in the belief of the Committee, the intense study and, it is hoped, the approval of the Profession.

In the section including Discussions, 15 contributions on 13 current topics are presented. Memoirs of 11

deceased members conclude the December Proceedings.

One important element of this number is the complete index to all the issues of Proceedings for the current year, including this number. The section on Society Affairs and that on Papers and Discussions are treated separately, the latter having both a title and subject index. The indexes are calculated to be very complete and accurate. They should prove to be a real convenience to members.

Power Division

By L. J. Bevan

Chairman, Executive Committee

THE Power Division, organized in 1923, has substantially increased the usefulness of the Society to many of its members, by promoting papers along progressive lines. We may properly, however, do much more.

Technical subjects have been proposed, prepared, and presented at Society meetings. Other technical subjects are being worked up by various authors. You members of the Division are undoubtedly in possession of information valuable to fellow-members and we trust you will feel the obligation to bring the question of presentation therefore to the consideration of your Executive Committee.

The subject of governmental regulations regarding safety of dams has recurrent emphasis with each dam failure. From time to time, various States have proposed legislation and, in order to crystallize ideas, a paper on this subject is to be presented next January at our Division session in New York, by Arthur H. Markwart, Member, Vice-President of the Pacific Gas and Electric Company. Please be prepared to participate in the discussion so that eventually the Society may be in a position to contribute sound advice to Legislatures.

At the January meeting, also, we expect to have "Progress of the Art" as to Power presented by George A. Orrick, Member.

It has been suggested that the Power Division consider the Federal supervision of power in its various aspects, including the part played by the Federal Power Commission, and possibly also the desirability of a Federal Commission having supervision over public utility holding companies with a view to strengthening the monopoly of a single organization

in a definite territory and to preventing piracy in such territory by other companies. Perhaps we should consider from a fundamental standpoint the public ownership of utilities and its economic philosophy. A comprehensive study of the effect of widespread public ownership upon our American economic structure might have very valuable consequences.

Power is a fundamental of a large part of the wealth of the nation, and studies of its broad economics are timely. This leads to the further suggestion that properly qualified members of the Society, in committee, study the steps that should be taken in engineering education, in order that future public utility officers and engineers may be broadly and soundly prepared. Submit your comments for our general good.

Assured!

FROM most, and possibly all points in the country, members are assured of reduced rates to attend the Annual Meeting next January.

For the past three years reduced railroad rates for attendance at the Annual Meeting has been contingent upon the validation of a minimum of 250 certificates, and members were not certain of the reduced fares until after that minimum of certificates had been deposited and validated in New York.

This year, the Society has been granted a plan whereby certificates will be forwarded with the meeting program, the presentation of the certificates to the local ticket agents enabling the members and their families to purchase one and one-half fare (with minimum of \$1.00) tickets for the round trip.

Should it be desired for business or other reasons to prolong the stay longer than the time limit of the one and one-half fare tickets, round-trip tickets may be purchased at one and three-fifths fare with return limit of 30 days from date of sale, the selling dates and other conditions to be the same as those applying in connection with the fare and one-half rates.

As the selling dates for tickets under this plan will differ slightly in different parts of the country, members should telephone their ticket agents on receipt of the Annual Meeting program and inquire about the selling dates for their territory,

in order that they will be certain to obtain the advantage of the reduced fare.

This assurance of reduced fares may be just the element that makes for a decision to attend the Annual Meeting—January 15, 16, and 17, 1930.

New Orleans 1877

(Continued from page 1)

chiefly under water. The constant and deep diapason of the thunder was audible above the noise of the moving train. In the morning we learned that we were several hours late, a culvert, having been washed away, and replaced while we slept. Later, we learned that a 'freight' had been wrecked up the road, and then another long delay occurred, the passengers consoling themselves that it might have been our train instead, which would almost certainly have gone down the embankment, had we been on time.

"Transferring to another train at the wreck, we were taken to Dallas, here to wait some hours for transportation. The writer was enabled to contribute to the happiness and interest of the day, in that remote town, by appearing upon the streets attired in a 'stovepipe'. Dallas is a new town, and bears fair promise of a solid future. One of the chief occupations of the natives seems to consist in pugilism. Three well conducted and highly diversified fights came to my notice in the course of our stay."



"We visited the Water Works at Sedalia. They are very extensive. The water is first ground (three-fourths), as I understand it, in order to give the particles held in solution required fineness. It is then allowed to settle, and the surface is drawn off with pipes which lead to the breweries. It looks better as beer; like the eggs the restaurant cook wanted to scramble when a customer ordered them boiled. This was all explained to me in detail by the gentleman who put up the mill for the city, but I can only give an outline of the process here."

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